



INTELLIGENCE NOTE

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USSR/EASTERN EUROPE: MOUNTING CAMPAIGN AGAINST
 RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY

Although the attacks of the Warsaw Pact nations against RFE and RL (as well as -- to a lesser extent -- the VOA, BBC, and other Western broadcasting stations) have been a constant feature of bloc propaganda since the early 1950's, the volume and intensity of the attacks on these two stations during the past month is believed to exceed considerably all attacks in 1970.¹ They have increased markedly since the Polish riots in December 1970 and, particularly, since the late January proposal of US Senator Case on financing of RFE and RL. All the Warsaw Pact regimes have since carried articles or commentaries related to the Case statements and to RFE/RL ties to the CIA.

Content in Latest Campaign. In addition to various attacks on the US Government for its operation and control of the two stations on foreign territory, commentary has increasingly criticized the Brandt Government for permitting the stations to remain on "sovereign" FRG territory and to broadcast "cold war" commentary -- at a time when the Brandt Government professes to seek detente and normalization of its relations with Eastern Europe. As an earnest of the FRG's good will and intentions, calls have been made for the removal of the stations from West German territory.

1. At the same time only Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and the USSR continue to jam RFE/RL broadcasts.

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Some East European regimes have hinted or threatened boycott of the 1972 Olympics in Munich unless the stations cease operations in that city. The Poles -- and to a lesser extent the East Germans -- have charged the station with supporting violence and excesses in Polish cities during the December riots; the East Germans and Moscow in particular have also found it convenient to link the two stations with reactionary elements in the FRG and the US opposed to Ostpolitik and charged them with subverting "good neighborly relations" between the FRG and Eastern Europe.

Coordinated Campaign Evident. The conclusion that the bloc campaign is systematic and coordinated is supported by the fact that various regimes have drawn on attacks published elsewhere. For example, the Hungarian Party central organ attack on RFE -- which included a 1967 memorandum from former Free Europe Committee President Richardson to Senator Eastland thanking the latter for his "intervention" in the question of RFE survival - was referred to by the Soviet Party organ, Pravda. The Pravda article in turn was summarized by Radio Moscow broadcasts to Slovakia and by a Czechoslovak radio station. Bloc propaganda has also publicized Western and FRG press criticism of RFE and RL in an effort to further the campaign.

Diplomatic Demarches to the FRG and the US. In addition to the propaganda campaign waged by the media, diplomatic demarches have been made to the US and FRG over the issue of RFE broadcasts. In 1968 and 1969, Romanian Deputy Foreign Minister Macovescu made two unpublicized

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mild demarches to Bonn, apparently in the context of conversations on other subjects. During the Ceausescu visit to the US last fall, Dumitru Popescu, in charge of Romanian cultural-media activities, attacked RFE in conversations with a US official, maintaining that the station interfered in Romanian internal affairs. At no time, however, have the Romanians appeared inclined to make RFE more than a marginal issue in bilateral relations with either the US or FRG.

On the other hand, the Polish regime has made more serious demarches to the US and FRG on the question of RFE. In 1970, the Poles were reported to have mentioned RFE broadcasts several times during the course of Polish-FRG negotiations and, on one occasion, implied that continuation of the broadcasts could complicate Polish agreement to an FRG request for a softer propaganda-cultural policy vis-a-vis West Germany.

The Poles have also made demarches to US officials which charged, inter alia, that RFE broadcasts to Poland were an irritant to both the Polish Government and the population. In a January 6, 1971, discussion between Polish Deputy Foreign Minister Winiewicz and US Ambassador Stoessel, Winiewicz said Poland considered RFE broadcasts an irritant in its relations with the US. He charged that these broadcasts to Poland in December 1970 were unnecessarily provocative, spread false rumors, spoke offensively of Polish political personalities, and speculated on leadership changes. While he did not single out any individual broadcasts, he said that their whole tone was objectionable.

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A second Polish Foreign Ministry official told a US Embassy Officer in Warsaw that should the RFE "cold war rhetoric" persist, the Polish Government would be forced to draw "inescapable conclusions." (In this instance VOA broadcasts were attacked as well.)

Although Czechoslovakia has long been in the forefront of East European attacks on RFE, the government is not known to have made any formal demarches on RFE to either US or FRG officials. It is possible that such a demarche will be made in the forthcoming Czechoslovak-West German negotiations on normalization of relations. However, during the December 1970 trial of US citizen Fred Eidlin on charges of gathering information on the political and economic situation in Czechoslovakia for RFE, the Czechoslovak prosecutor declared that the Czechoslovak Supreme Court had ruled in 1970 that RFE was a "subversive organization."

Reflections on Bloc Campaign. The Case statements on RFE and RL unquestionably provided a new source of material and a new focal point for a systematic, concerted campaign against the two stations. In addition, another factor allegedly affecting the present campaign is the approaching renewal of the permits of the two stations to continue their activities in Munich: the FRG must decide by June 1, 1971, whether to renew the licenses-- a fact recently belabored in Bulgarian propaganda.

Awareness of a new FRG sensitivity to the Soviet-East European protests must also be a contributing factor to their campaign to close down the stations. These regimes undoubtedly feel that they can better exert pressure on the FRG -- in view of Ostpolitik and the avowed intention of the Brandt Government to normalize relations with Eastern European nations.

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These nations have long considered the two stations (as well as other Western broadcasting stations) an irritant and would welcome their demise. At the same time, however, their demise is not likely to be a high-priority issue -- except, perhaps for the Poles -- in relations with the FRG -- certainly not of the magnitude of the Western recognition of the status quo in Europe inclusive of the Oder-Neisse border, an abrogation of Munich ab initio, and the FRG's recognition of the GDR. There is no evidence that the East European regimes are prepared to pay any price, such as abating their propaganda, for any change in the status of the stations. At this juncture, it appears unlikely that any of the regimes would boycott the 1972 Olympics if the two stations were operating in Munich at that time. It cannot be gainsaid, however, that the presence of the two stations on the territory of the FRG, as well as their very existence and system of financing, provide convenient material for the propagandists of the various regimes.

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